

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A surgical tool for implantation of an electrode array comprising:
a frontally closed end portion having a curved shape, the curved shape defining a rounded front exterior surface and a back interior surface opposite the rounded front exterior surface;
a base portion coupled to the back interior surface of the end portion at a first location of the back interior surface; and
a top portion coupled to the back interior surface of the end portion at a second location of the back interior surface;

wherein a distance between the first location and the second location defines an open space open toward an end opposite from said frontally closed end portion, suitable to receive and protect an electrode array, the top portion and the ~~bottom~~ base portion being movable with respect to each other to gently grip and hold the electrode array, between the base portion and the top portion, and wherein in at least one operating condition of the surgical tool the base portion is substantially parallel to the top portion.
2. (Previously Presented) The surgical tool according to claim 1, further comprising a hinge connecting said top portion to said end portion.
3. (Previously Presented) The surgical tool according to claim 1, wherein said top portion and base portion are curved to radii.
4. (Original) The surgical tool according to claim 3, wherein said radii approximate the radius of an eye.
5. Cancelled.

6. (Original) The surgical tool according to claim 1, further comprising a keeper connected to said base portion and limiting travel of said top portion.
7. (Previously Presented) The surgical tool according to claim 1, further comprising notches in said base portion adapted to meet guides in said top portion and latch said base portion and said top portion together.
8. (Original) The surgical tool according to claim 1, fashioned from a biocompatible elastic material.
9. (Original) The surgical tool according to claim 8, wherein said biocompatible elastic material is ABS.
10. (Original) The surgical tool according to claim 8, wherein said biocompatible elastic material is stainless steel.
11. (Previously Presented) The surgical tool according to claim 1, wherein said open space between the base portion and the top portion is adapted to fit said electrode array when placed between said top portion and said base portion.
12. (Previously Presented) A method of implanting an electrode array comprising:
providing a surgical tool having a frontally closed end portion having a curved shape, the curved shape defining a rounded front exterior surface and a back interior surface opposite the rounded front exterior surface, a base portion coupled to the back interior surface of the end portion at a first location of the back interior surface, a top portion coupled to the back interior surface of the end portion at a second location of the back interior surface, wherein a distance between the first location and the second location defines an open space between the base portion and the top portion, the top portion and the bottom portion being movable with respect to each other to

gently grip and hold the electrode array, and wherein in at least one operating condition of the surgical tool the base portion is substantially parallel to the top portion;

placing an electrode array inside said open space with a cable coupled to said electrode extending in a direction opposite from said end portion;

passing said surgical tool and said electrode array into a body, said rounded-front surface first.

13. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 12, further comprising the step of using said rounded-front surface to separate extra ocular muscle.

14. (Original) The method according to claim 12, further comprising the step of inserting said surgical tool into an orbital socket.

15. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 12, further comprising the step of releasing said electrode array from said surgical tool once it is within the orbital socket.

16. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 15, further comprising the step of inserting said surgical tool into the orbital socket through a hole in a skull.

17. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 12, further comprising the step of providing a hinge between said top portion and said base portion.

18. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 17, further comprising the step of applying pressure to said top portion and said base portion to retain said electrode array within said top portion and said base portion.

19. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 12, further comprising the step of curving said top portion.

20. (Previously Presented) A surgical tool for implantation of an electrode array comprising:

a frontally closed end portion having an exterior curved shape, the curved shape defining a rounded front surface and a back surface opposite the rounded front surface;

a base portion coupled to the back surface of the end portion at a first location of the back surface, said base portion having an outer surface which is concave in one dimension and convex in another dimension, and having an inner surface which is convex in one dimension and flat in another dimension;

a top portion coupled to the back surface of the end portion at a first location of the back surface, said top portion having an outer surface which is convex in two dimensions and having an inner surface which is concave in one dimension and flat in another dimension; and

wherein a distance between the first location and the second location defines an open space between the base portion and the top portion, and wherein the base portion is substantially parallel to the top portion in at least one operating condition of the surgical tool.

21. (Previously Presented) The surgical tool according to claim 1, wherein the open space defines a lateral opening of the surgical tool.

22. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 15, wherein the open space defines a lateral opening of the surgical tool and releasing said electrode array from said surgical tool is performed through said lateral opening.

23. (Previously Presented) The surgical tool according to claim 20, wherein the open space defines a lateral opening of the surgical tool.

24. (Previously Presented) A surgical tool for implantation of an electrode array, the surgical tool comprising:

an end portion having a curved shape, the curved shape defining a rounded front surface and a back surface opposite the rounded front surface;

a base portion coupled to the back surface of the end portion at a first location of the back surface; and

a top portion coupled to the back surface of the end portion at a second location of the back surface,

the base portion and top portion defining a lateral opening of the surgical tool,

wherein in a first operating condition a distance between the base portion and the top portion is controlled to allow retention of the electrode array and

in a second operating condition the distance between the base portion and the top portion is controlled to allow release of the electrode array through the lateral opening.

25. (Previously Presented) The surgical tool of claim 24, wherein the end portion is a frontally closed end portion.

26. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 15, wherein said step of releasing is laterally releasing the electrode array through the open space.

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